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WEEKEND, JANUARY 13-15, 2017

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Ultimate model shown ♦

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INDIGENOUS FILMMAKERS BRING URGENCY TO SUNDANCE
metroLIFE

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, JANUARY 13-15, 2017

High -10°C/Low -20°C But not snowing at least

EMPTY THREAT

City is ticketing — it's just not towing during overnight bans

Dylan C. Robertson
For Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa didn't tow a single car during two recent overnight parking bans, leaving snow plow operators to work around thousands of vehicles to clear the roads.

While tow trucks stayed out of the mix, on Dec. 30, bylaw staff handed out 4,195 parking tickets. This Wednesday netted a quarter fewer, with 3,060 tickets.

The city's parking enforcement chief says Ottawa's bylaw officers and private tow trucks would simply have too many cars to tow.

"Given the potential number of vehicles parked on-street city-wide, towing such a large number is not feasible," Troy Leeson told Metro in an email. "Enforcement acts as a deterrent to impeding snow clearing operations by parking on-street."

Councillor Diane Deans says that might be the best policy, with the drop in tickets suggesting some people took notice.

"There's an additional cost to our taxpayers to send those plows down the road a second time," said the Gloucester-Southgate councillor. "It's a nuisance if our residents aren't obeying it."

The city does tow vehicles (including permit holders) during snow clearing, which involves removing existing snow banks in high-density areas. But not during plowing, despite the overnight parking ban public announcements indicating they could tow vehicles.

According to the number of cars ticketed and the fine charged ($75 within 15 days, $95 after) the city will make between $229,500 and $398,525 for each of the two overnight bans. The city said that offsets the cost of deploying plows and 42 bylaw staff.

Councillor David Chernushenko said he hasn't heard from residents upset they were ticketed. Rather, he often gets complaints about "increasingly narrow and rutted" streets in the Glebe and Old Ottawa South, and snowbanks that lean into most of the road despite multiple plowings.

"Once that gets thawed and then frozen into a solid bank, it's something that's extremely hard to undo."

Chernushenko said the city should consider moving cars, but not necessarily impounding them.

"In other cities, they tow the car to the next nearest block or sidestreet, or one that has already been plowed."

The city's road services director said blocking plows is more than just a nuisance. "We need to ensure that roads remain safe and passable for vehicles, including emergency vehicles at all times," Luc Gagné said.

METRO FILE

BY THE NUMBERS

Number of tickets issued during two recent bans

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DODGE Caravan Kids

metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Westwood: Obama's goodbye and Trump's media hello couldn't have been more different. **World**

INFO SESSIONS

Police to explain changes

Adam Kveton
For Metro | Ottawa

There is a lot of change happening in the Ottawa Police Service, and police hope to show residents what that will look like at four info sessions.

The sessions are expected to have a strong focus on the community policing model, said Superintendent Mark Ford, who's heavily involved in the Service Initiative revamp.

His message on that front is there will be very little change from a civilian perspective.

"You still have your (community police officers), you still have your point of contact," said Ford. Though some areas will see less of their community police officer than they had.

Rather than assigning them to particular neighbourhoods, they will serve several and go wherever there is a need.

Where those places in need are can change fairly quickly, said Ford.

The Ottawa police are moving to a more generalist model for policing, where more officers are available for frontline police work as needed, fewer officers work at service desks, while more online options for reporting are provided.

The info sessions take place at the Nepean Sports Complex on Jan. 16, the Kanata Recreation Complex Jan. 18, the Bob MacQuarrie Rec. Complex Jan. 19 and at city hall on Jan. 25. All sessions begin at 7 p.m.

The city is proposing reducing Elgin Street to two lanes to make room for wider sidewalks. CONTRIBUTED

Business owners wary of narrower street plan

ELGIN STREET

Councillor says highest priority has to be pedestrians

Dylan C. Robertson
For Metro | Ottawa

Elgin Street is set for a drastic, pedestrian-focused redesign and with Coun. Catherine McKenney pushing for a 30 km/h speed limit, some business owners are pushing back.

Since last June, the city has been mulling a redesign of Elgin St. and its southern continuation, Hawthorne Ave, with more benches and trees. This week, the city proposed widening sidewalks by halving the 122 parking spots between Lisgar and Isabella streets.

Strolling Elgin St. with her baby in tow, local resident Genna Woolston said she could use more sidewalk space, especially during winter.

"It's important to make space for bikes," she said. "It funnels the cars, and it puts the bikes together, so the visibility makes it safer."

Across the road at Al's Steakhouse, co-owner Gloria McCann says businesses can't handle less parking.

"There are people who are cruising the streets for a long time to look for parking," said McCann, whose restaurant owns a parking lot. "After the snowplow comes, cars can't get onto side streets."

McCann said rising food prices have closed a handful of Elgin St. eateries. She feels nicer streetscapes would boost customers, but construction zones could kill more businesses.

"Elgin Street is way past-due for beautification."

McKenney heard similar opinions Wednesday night at a packed public meeting.

Of 600 online submissions, McKenney said almost all advocated wider sidewalks and traffic-calming measures. "On a street like Elgin, the highest priority has to be pedestrians, and we've done that here."

In addition to a 30 km/h speed limit, McKenney wants raised intersections to slow drivers, who can opt for under-capacity streets like Metcalfe, O'Connor and Kent. "There are options other than coming into the downtown and just going through it."

The city is planning a third public consultation later this month, aiming to present a final plan to the transportation committee in April. Construction isn't anticipated until at least 2019.

PAY SYSTEM

Back-up urged for Phoenix

Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Ottawa

Frustrated by the continuing problems with the Phoenix pay system one public service union wants the government to bring in a second pay system until the issue can be resolved.

On Thursday, the Professional Institute of the Public Service called for the government to step in as they approach a full-year of the malfunctioning pay system.

"It's been almost a year since the Phoenix fiasco was foisted on our members and we need better system in place to help struggling civil servants," said the group's president Debi Daviau. "I'm frustrated and have run completely out of patience."

In a statement, Judy Foote, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, emphasized the government has a system for emergency loans already in place. "There is absolutely no reason why anyone should go without his or her pay. Every employee can receive emergency salary advances for missing pay," she said.

She said while they work to solve the bigger problem they have reminded managers and deputy ministers they can make salary advances available.

Daviau said that only covers people who are not receiving any pay at all, not any of the many other issues that have come up.

5 THINGS TO DO IN THE CITY THIS WEEKEND

The cold is expected to set back this weekend, but here are a few events that are sure to get your blood flowing. **ADAM KVETON** METRO

1 It's the 80s at the NAC (Friday and Saturday)

For all those in for a blast from the past, the NAC orchestra has got what you need. Their All Night Long: The Music of the 80s show at Southam Hall includes hits like Summer of '69, Phil Collins' In the Air Tonight, and Cyndi Lauper's True Colors. Tickets start at $25. Show starts 8 p.m.

2 Get down at the Electric Pow Wow (Saturday)

DJs Bear Witness and NDN of A Tribe Called Red will be performing at Babylon Nightclub, with doors opening at 10 p.m. Tickets are $10 at the door.

3 Winter Market at Shenkman (Saturday)

Several dozen vendors are set to sell their wares at the Shenkman Arts Centre from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Items range from tasty treats to mittens to furniture. Entry is free.

4 Carleton student art exhibition

The fourth Carleton Community Art Exhibition opens Friday, with art ranging from paintings to photographs to textiles, all made by Carleton University students, staff or alumni. Head to the Carleton University Art Gallery to check it out, and maybe catch some of the artists at the opening reception from noon to 1 p.m. on Jan. 13. Admission is free.

5 Gearing up to walk the aisle? (Saturday and Sunday)

The Wedding Palace Bridal Show winter addition will take over the Shaw Centre from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. With exhibitors from make-up artists to the Canadian Science and Technology Museum, chances are it's got what you need. Tickets start at $13 if you buy online in advance.

CANADA 150

Winterlude gets a boost from feds

Dylan C. Robertson
For Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa and Gatineau officials say next month's Winterlude will be one of the most exciting in the festival's 39 years.

To celebrate Canada's 150 years of confederation, Winterlude will feature artists from across Canada from Feb. 3 to 20, like David Usher, Coleman Hell and Scott Helman. Confederation Park's ice sculpture garden will kick off with a laser show.

Gatineau's Jacques-Cartier Park will feature a zip-line and snow-walled maze, in addition to last year's massive snow sculptures.

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said Thursday that Winterlude is a better draw than Quebec City's Winter Carnival: "We can safely say we're the most exciting and vibrant winter festival in Canada, if not North America."

Winterlude ends on Family Day, when Watson welcomes families to skate on the Rink of Dreams outside city hall.

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Canuck cliché may be true

IDENTITY

Canadians are as nice as the world insists, author says

When Michigan-born author Kerry Colburn started dating a Canadian, her girlfriends had an immediate great impression of him — without even meeting the guy.

"They would say, 'Oh you're so lucky, you're dating a Canadian. Those guys are so nice!'" recalls Colburn, who went on to marry the Canuck.

The fact he was Canadian seemed to be the only thing her gal pals needed to know, she chuckles.

The notion that Canadians are extra nice is an enduring stereotype the Seattle-based writer wholeheartedly buys into, and it would seem a lot of Americans do, too.

Meryl Streep was the latest to invoke the cliché in her Golden Globes speech on Sunday, a barbed critique of U.S. president-elect Donald Trump that included a salute to Ontario's Ryan Gosling for being "the nicest people."

"It's so funny that of all the adjectives that she could use for the Canadians she says 'the nicest,' right?" says Colburn, who teamed with her husband to co-write the books "The U.S. of EH?" and "So, You Want to be Canadian?"

Like it or not, Canadians should embrace this persistent perception, mostly because it's true, U.S. author and avid traveller Eric Weiner says.

"I get a lot of push-back from Canadians who say, 'We're really not that nice,'" says Weiner.

"I know Canadians will bristle and say, 'We're really just passive-aggressive.' … There is an element of passivity, I think, in the Canadian character that comes across sometimes, but really I think the niceness is this politeness and this humility that we don't have here."

Of course, like any stereotype, the notion of the "nice Canadian" is not universally true, he adds. THE CANADIAN PRESS

POLITICS

TRUDEAU FACES TOUGH QUESTIONS ON TOUR

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gestures to a member of the audience during the question and answer session during a town hall meeting in Kingston, Ont. on Thursday.

Trudeau, who faced critical questions about issues including the Phoenix pay controversy and the handling of indigenous issues, is at the start of a whirlwind, taxpayer-funded outreach tour. THE CANADIAN PRESS

VACATION

PM confirms, defends private flight to island

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is confirming — and defending — his use of a private helicopter while vacationing with the Aga Khan, saying it was the only way to get to his friend's secluded Bahamian island.

The prime minister and his family spent time over Christmas at Bell Island in the Bahamas.

To do so, they flew to Nassau on a Canadian government jet, but made the last leg of the journey aboard the Aga Khan's helicopter.

Trudeau's own ethics guidelines bar the use of sponsored travel in private aircraft, allowing only for exceptional circumstances related to the job of prime minister and only with the prior approval of the ethics commissioner.

But he says he doesn't believe the trip poses any ethical dilemma.

He says he's happy to discuss the matter with conflict of interest and ethics commissioner Mary Dawson "and answer any questions she may have."

Trudeau only confirmed the helicopter flight when speaking to reporters on Thursday, noting it's the only way to get to Bell Island.

"The travel back and forth from Nassau happens on the Aga Khan's private helicopter, which he offered us the use of," Trudeau said. "It's something that certainly we look forward to discussing with the conflict of interest and ethics commissioner, but we don't see an issue on that." He repeated that the vacation was a family trip.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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No joking about this bromance

UNITED STATES

Biden in tears as Obama gives him medal

An emotional Joe Biden accepts the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama awarded Vice-President Joe Biden with the highest civilian honour Thursday, commemorating an "extraordinary man with an extraordinary career in public service."

A teary-eyed Biden accepted the Presidential Medal of Freedom at a ceremony at the White House dedicated to honouring the outgoing vice-president.

Obama said he is bestowing the honour on Biden for "faith in your fellow Americans, for your love of country and a lifetime of service that will endure through the generations."

Biden praised his wife and children for their support throughout his career, and praised the Obama family for their dedication to country and service.

"I was part of the journey of a remarkable man who did remarkable things," Biden said.

Speaking ahead of Biden, Obama said the tribute will give the Internet one last chance to joke about the "bromance" the two share. He called Biden the "best possible choice, not just for me, but for the American people."

Obama commended the "Biden heart," listing the influences in Biden's life, from the nuns who taught him in grade school, to his Senate colleagues, to his parents.

Noting that Biden's career is "nowhere close to finished," Obama said his vice-president will go on to have an impact in the U.S. and abroad.

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The differences between the Obama presidency and the incoming Trump administration couldn't have been sharper this week. GETTY IMAGES

Goodbye and hello

Obama's big farewell, and Trump's first media hello, couldn't have done more to put the past and present into sharp relief

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.

Did you hear the echo in Barack Obama's voice during his farewell address this week? It made him sound like a man already speaking from the past.

Or if you take seriously his message of hope — that consistent, plodding message of hope — a man speaking from the future.

Maybe you were also online, watching the stories stream in via CNN and the New York Times detailing all the dirt that Russia, allegedly, has on President-elect Donald Trump.

Watching reporters lob complicated, double-barred questions at Trump during his press conference the next day, questions he easily sidestepped; watching Trump turn said press conference, meant to cover his enormous conflicts of interest, into a referendum on how the media handled the steamy allegations of blackmail dirt; watching Trump stock the marbled room with a cheering audience and piles of paper, signalling that all press conferences from now on will be staged like a performance; all this suggested that someone still has the upper hand. And it's an orange one.

This week, with Obama's big goodbye, and Trump's first media hello, couldn't have done more to put the past and present into sharp relief.

Obama spoke, as always, with passion, composure, and eloquent complete sentences. Trump spoke, as always, with derision, falsities and the rhetorical equivalent of splashing around in a pool. Very early Wednesday morning, Trump compared his political opponents to "Nazi Germany" on Twitter.

Later, we learned that the 2016 "Russia Law Firm of the Year," Morgan Lewis, was picked to handle Trump's business conflicts of interest, just as Trump was forced to admit Russia hacked the DNC and sought to influence the U.S. election in his favour, which itself came after months of Putin-fawning and intelligence-community bashing. Putin's fondness for Trump is "an asset," Trump asserted, without any irony. Later, he took to Twitter to tell everyone to go "buy L.L. Bean."

Trump's attack on Buzzfeed and CNN during his press conference should alarm the media. (He called Buzzfeed a "failing pile of garbage," and CNN "fake news," and refused to answer a CNN reporter's questions.) So should his clear disinterest in regular press conferences.

The institution of the presidency will not emerge from four years of Trump unchanged. It's already begun to mould around him.

The institution of the presidency will not emerge from four years of Trump unchanged. It's already begun to mould around him during the transition, especially on the matter of communication with the press and conflicts of interest. When Trump called the unsubstantiated report of Russian blackmail and influence "fake news," he continued the tradition of hyperbolic statements intended to destabilize any sense of a common reality.

When he again argued only reporters, and no ordinary Americans, care about seeing his tax returns, he ignored the facts. This week, a Pew Research Centre poll found 60 per cent of Americans agree with reporters, but 53 per cent of Republicans agree with Trump.

Trump, it's clear, considers his supporters to be Americans, the media to be the enemy, and everyone else to be invisible. This is how we can expect him to govern. From hope to harassment: The presidential transition of our time.

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IMARKETING

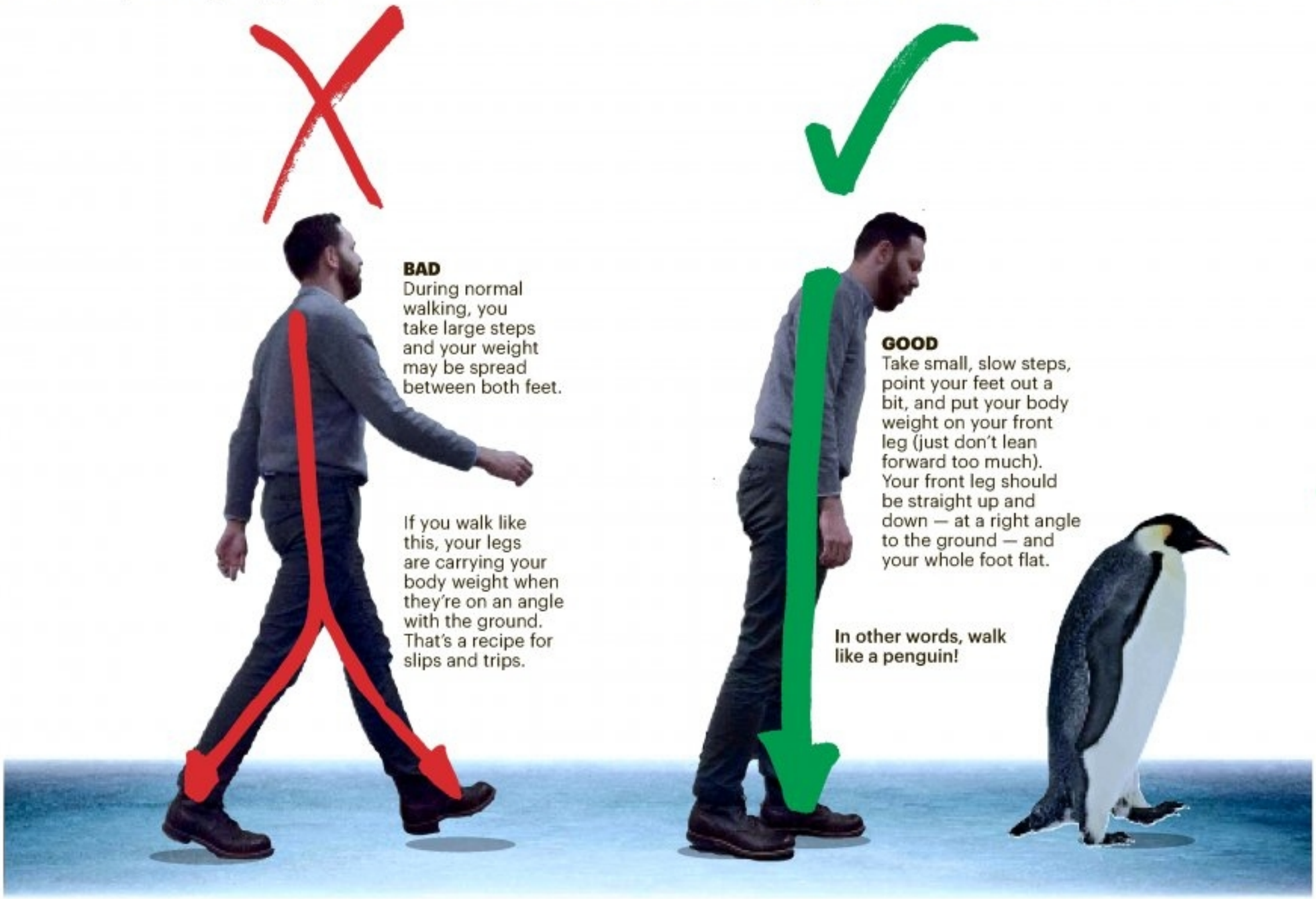
metro SCIENCE
Your essential daily news

Doggone sad: Big dogs may have short lives because they burn a lot of energy, making chemicals called free radicals that speed up aging

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

MARCH LIKE A PENGUIN, FOR SAFETY

Falls are a big deal. In winter, very real fear of falling can isolate the elderly and people with disabilities indoors, but anyone can take a tumble. A group of German doctors has published guidelines on how to walk safely during slippery-sidewalk season. We recruited Metro reporter Luke Simcoe to demonstrate.



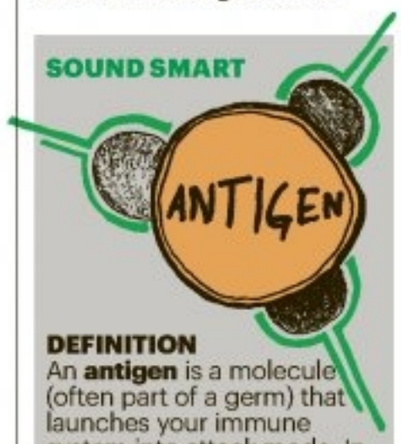
FINDINGS
Your week in science

STEVEN G. JOHNSON

MONKEY MATH
University of Toronto researchers believe capuchin monkeys have some understanding of probability. When given a choice between different jars, they pick ones with proportionally more peanuts. It's a level of numeracy beyond "less" and "more" we thought only humans had.

TIGHTEST KNOT
University of Manchester scientists have the boy scouts beat. They braided molecular strands into the tightest, most complex knot ever made. It crosses itself eight times.

SOUND SMART



DEFINITION
An **antigen** is a molecule (often part of a germ) that launches your immune system into attack mode. In response to contact with an **antigen**, you make sticky proteins called **antibodies** to fight it.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE
Everybody is staying ten feet away from Deborah because she's sneezing and sniffling. But she doesn't have the flu. Her body thinks the dust in here is an **antigen**, even though it's harmless, and her immune system is on the attack. She has a dust **allergy**.

CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

How can I boost my immune system?

Does zinc, echinacea or vitamin C help boost the immune system? - Levon, Toronto

Given what a gnarly cold and flu season we're in, I wish I had some better news for you. Alas, no.

The first thing to ask when someone claims this or that potion "boosts the immune system" is "Which part of it?" The immune system isn't one thing. It's physical barriers, specialized cells and response mechanisms all working together to fight off invaders like cold and flu viruses.

The second thing to ask is "what are the side effects?" A true, measurable, significant boost to the immune system can leave you feeling pretty crummy. Ever gotten a shot of interferon to help rev up the inflammatory response your body uses to fight a virus? The disease-fighting proteins released into the blood are the same ones you get from a hangover. What about sargramostim, which helps make white blood cells if yours have been wiped out by chemo? One of the side effects is "bone pain." Ick.

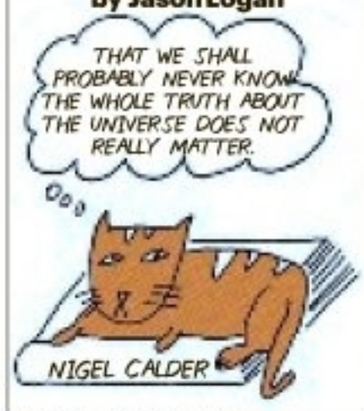
It's true your immune system may fall down on the job if you're stressed, malnourished, smoking, or deficient in essential vitamins or minerals. But if you're generally healthy, there isn't that much you can do to get immunity superpowers, cool as that would be.

On to specifics: There's a bit of evidence, from reviews of previous studies, that taking echinacea or zinc supplements may shorten the duration of colds very slightly. But the data are mixed and the effect is small to insignificant, especially in the case of echinacea. Getting enough vitamin C helps you have fewer colds, but it doesn't do much once you're sick.

A vitamin D researcher I spoke to once reminded me of something else: Some studies that find that vitamin supplements have a benefit (i.e. a vitamin prevents colds), didn't screen people for deficiency. The pills didn't give people extra immunity: They fixed what was broken, allowing the immune system to work as it should.

Science Question? Tweet @genna_buck

PHILOSOPHER CAT
by Jason Logan



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Shaking things up at Sundance

CANADIAN CONTENT

Indigenous films bring new sense of urgency to fest

Rise and Rumble aren't just the titles of two noteworthy Canadian productions headed to this month's Sundance Film Festival. They're also statements of purpose.

Canada's filmmakers are out to get attention and shake up conventional wisdom at Sundance (Jan. 19-29).

This is especially true regarding films from Canada's indigenous communities. They've always been welcome at Sundance, but the selections this year have a new sense of urgency.

Rise, directed by Toronto's Michelle Latimer, an Algonquin/Métis filmmaker, is an original series for Rogers Media's Viceland TV channel, planned for broadcast early this year.

Premiering in Sundance's Special Events section, Rise is billed as "a condemnation of colonialism and a celebration of Indigenous people worldwide." Three episodes premiering at Sundance — Sacred Water, Red Power and Apache Stronghold — show how native North Americans and their global supporters are peacefully, but forcefully, fighting back against exploitation of their land: at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation spanning North Dakota and South Dakota, where the Dakota Access Pipeline threatens water supplies; and also at Arizona's San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation, where mining companies seek to dig up sacred ground.

"As a filmmaker I think I have a very real responsibility to bear witness," director/showrunner Latimer says via email. "How can I go work on a reality show about food or something when there are people in my own community dying because of lack of clean water, medical care and housing — and this is supposed to be in one of the most affluent countries in the world?

"Something is very, very wrong when you look at that picture. Making films gives me a platform to explore and communicate the things in society I disagree with. And it gives me a productive place to direct my anger. Because believe me, I'm angry at both the disparity and the privilege I see around me every day." One of the Standing Rock episodes includes an interview with Jesse Wente, a member of the Ojibwa nation and TIFF's director of film programs.

"The rise of Indigenous media has really occurred in the last 10 years," he says. "There's absolutely a connection between the rise of things like Twitter, Facebook and other social media. The fact that you don't need to have a desk in a mainstream newsroom to necessarily have a voice in today's media has meant a lot for marginalized communities."

It also allows these communities to correct the historical record, which is the impetus for Rumble, subtitled The Indians Who Rocked the World. It's a documentary account of how musicians with aboriginal roots, including guitar greats Jimi Hendrix, Link Wray, Charley Patton and The Band's Robbie Robertson, made a profound impact on popular music.

Sundance director John Cooper is excited about Rise and Rumble playing his festival because these films are "taking it to a place where you can actually effect change through the storytelling itself. I think that's what Rumble is going to do, because ... it brings you closer into looking at our world a little differently.

"With Rise, I really like the whole notion of young people and young voices telling these stories, which is part of the mission of that project."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

I'm angry at both the disparity and the privilege I see around me every day.
Filmmaker Michelle Latimer

Michelle Latimer directs Rise, a Viceland TV series that's planned for broadcast early this year. Episodes show how native North Americans and their global supporters are peacefully but forcefully fighting back against exploitation of their land. COURTESY OF SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Sarnia porn star wins over Bollywood

DOCUMENTARY

Sunny Leone: Penthouse Pet of Year to icon of a new India

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

Filmmaker Dilip Mehta may have intimately studied the main character of his latest documentary, but he admits he's still completely baffled by Sunny Leone.

"Here is a former porn star in India, which is steeped in tradition," offered Mehta about the real-life Bollywood star of Mostly Sunny, opening in most cities today. "Even after spending two and a half years doing the film, I just don't get how India has accepted her with open arms."

The truth is Sunny Leone's success itself is a bit mysterious. Born in Sarnia, Ont., Sunny shot to fame at just 19 years old when she plunged herself into the porn industry and quickly rose to be crowned 2003's Penthouse Pet of the Year.

Today however, Leone has inexplicably become a Bollywood sensation by transitioning to mainstream movies — an unthinkable transformation in a traditional culture that channels an extreme kind of conservative parochialism.

"Her parents' generation, they have shunned her because of her choices," insisted the talented brother of Canadian auteur Deepa Mehta (Midnight's Children).

"It's a strange choice of words but the younger generation are really tickled pink by Sunny Leone because they find her liberating, they find her fresh and almost label her as a feminist."

Indeed, despite her lascivious start in the adult industry, Leone has truly become an ambassador of female empowerment in India.

Not only does she continue to be feted in Bollywood circles but her success has pushed a pseudo-liberation movement. Perhaps most compelling though is how her story is inspiring the next generation of Indian women.

"She is spearheading a movement," said Mehta of Leone's influence in India. "There must be (others) but none who have her acumen at making money and her history. And her history's remarkable.

"They're looking at her and saying maybe there is an alternative. Maybe what our parents have told us in life may not necessarily be true for us anymore — that you can make your own choices and possibly even succeed."

"I wanted to do it because it was a vehicle for (female empowerment). Plus, it was an introspective vehicle for me to look at India. India today is not the country I grew up in and I felt it's an interesting time to do such a film and use her as the vehicle."

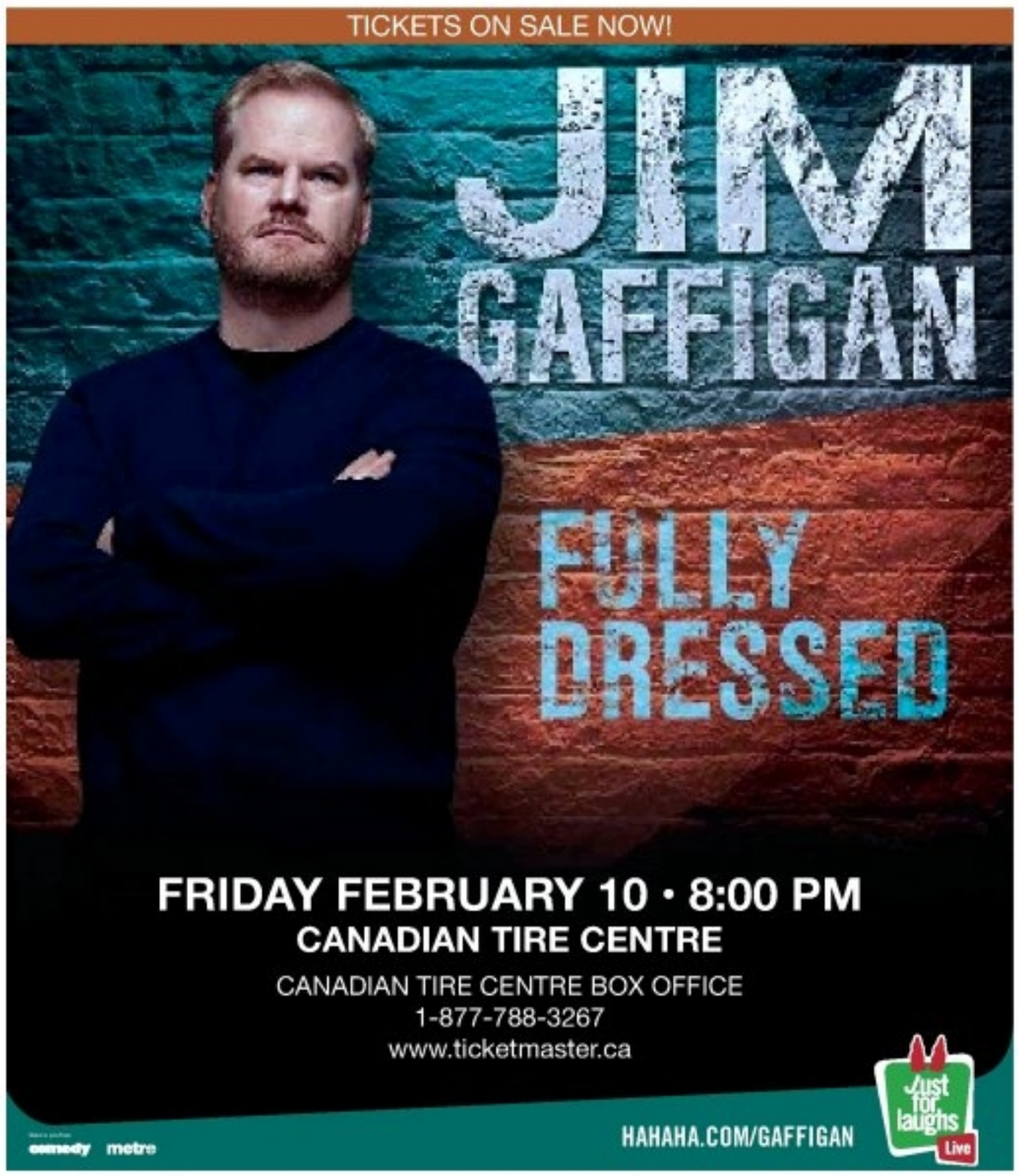
On the screen, Leone's acting ability also quickly won her an admirer in Mehta.

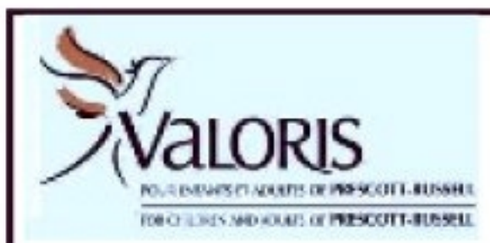
"I was floored by her honesty," he said of her work in the film. "My approach was to distance myself in one sense by being a fly on the wall.

"I think the film has done her wonderfully because she's come across as a strong woman, as an independent-thinking woman (and) good for her.

"Who are we to cast dispersions and judgment?"

Sunny Leone shot to fame in the porn industry at 19 before making an unprecedented move to the Bollywood big screen in often-conservative India. COURTESY OF MONGREL MEDIA





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RICHARD CROUSE ON THE MERYL STREEP HE KNOWS...

Overrated is the last word I would use to describe Meryl Streep as an actress or interview subject. Like everybody else I've admired her work from the early fresh-faced roles in films like Manhattan to the emotional catharsis of Kramer vs. Kramer, through her accent phase and on.

I've also interviewed her several times. In our conversations, as in her controversial speech at the Golden Globes, she's always been forthright, fearless and gracious.

Our first chat was 11 years ago in Minnesota. I've done hundreds of these things and the constant is the amount of time sitting in hotel hallways. Experience taught me to always bring a book.

I read until it was time to talk with Streep. I sat opposite her under hot TV lights. Then she did something remarkable. Before my first question she asked me one. "What book are you reading?" No actor had ever asked me about my ever-present book. As we chatted I was being seduced by the Streep charm.

She was doing what she does in her work; taking our time beyond the professional and into the personal. That bond to her audience and her characters is what makes her great, not just as an actress or speech-maker but also as a person. Overrated? I think not. RICHARD CROUSE/METRO

At the top of her field

Hollywood's second Grand Dame Annette Bening may be best of all

In 20th Century Women, Annette Bening serves up trademark density to Dorothea. CONTRIBUTED

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Richard Crouse
In Focus

Meryl Streep has a body of work that speaks for itself and, as she proved last Sunday night from the stage of the Golden Globes, is unafraid to challenge the status quo. But last week while the world formed opinions about Streep as she mouthed off about Donald Trump, I had my eye on someone in the audience.

During Streep's speech the camera landed on Annette Bening, who gives the Grand Dame a run for her money, acting wise.

This weekend Bening adds 20th Century Women to her already stellar IMDB resume. As free-spirited single mother Dorothea she is, as writer David Edelstein wrote, irreducible. In other words she's complex: loving yet standoffish, warm but steely, a hippie who studies the stock market and Bening brings her to vivid life.

It's that density of character that sets Bening apart from her peers, Streep included. Warren Beatty, her husband and sometimes director says she has, "talent, beauty, wit, humility and grace," a combination that makes her "the best actress alive."

Biased? Likely, but the evidence is on the screen. Bening works sporadically, sometimes taking years between projects or taking small supporting roles in idiosyncratic independent films like Ruby Sparks, but her characters are always compelling.

She became a star playing femme fatale Myra in 1990's con artist caper The Grifters. Gleefully embracing her character's deviousness, she stole the movie. Then came intricate portrayals of everything from a neurotic real estate broker in American Beauty to Bugsy's tough-talking Hollywood starlet and In Dreams' psychic vigilante. Each performances is a polished gem even when the movies aren't as good as she is.

The last of her Best Actress Oscar nods came with 2010's The Kids Are Alright. At the center of story are Nic (Bening) and Jules (Julianne Moore), a long time lesbian couple raising their two kids. It's a happy family until their daughter contacts her biological father Paul (Mark Ruffalo) via the sperm bank.

A scene near the movie's end displays the complexity of Bening's work. Nic and Paul sing a Joni Mitchell song at a dinner party. Their wild act is joyful, ridiculous and poignant simultaneously and is a perfect microcosm of Bening's performance. It's her well-drawn character that keeps the basic story afloat with its lived-in, realistic feel.

Less known is Bening's fine work in The Face of Love, a 2014 film about a widow obsessed with a man who looks exactly like her late husband Tom. Trouble is, she never tells him about his resemblance, raising the question: Is she in love with Tom or a memory?

Is she a selfish conniver, a grief stricken widow or one brick short of a load? The movie allows for interpretation, but regardless of your take, Bening's performance is so raw and vulnerable it's difficult to completely condemn her behaviour.

Bening's name may not always be mentioned in the hushed tones as Streep, but I suspect she doesn't care for the accolades as much as shattering the clichés of how women are portrayed on film. On that score she is at the top of her field.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Patriots Day ★★★★
Paterson ★★★★
20th Century Women ★★★★
Live By Night ★★★
Monster Trucks (no stars)
Bugs ★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★★	SEE IT
★★★	WORTHWHILE
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

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Storm fells California's beloved 'drive-thru' sequoia

5 CLASSIC SITES TO SEE WHEN YOU HIT UP ATHENS

As a seaside metropolis with a lively outdoor vibe and dozens of picturesque islands beckoning nearby, Athens is more often considered a summer tourist destination than a winter escape. But if you've got more than beaches on your mind, there's plenty of upside to a brief cool visit that avoids the crowds and heat of summer. Here's a suggested itinerary for a three-day visit: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1 The Odeon of Herodes Atticus

The Odeon of Herodes Atticus, or Herodeon is a stone theatre structure located on the southwest slope of the Acropolis of Athens. The Herodeon still hosts the occasional live performance.

2 The Erechtheionin

The Acropolis is particularly striking to view at night, when brilliantly illuminated. A 10-euro entrance fee to the compound takes you along a course of the central structures of Greek mythology as you climb past the Theatre of Dionysus, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion.

4 Temple of Poseidon

A rewarding outing is the bus ride along the "Greek Riviera" down to the southern peninsula of Sounion, where the Temple of Poseidon reveals a breathtaking view of the sea. The deep blue waters ripple around the ancient hilltop structure dedicated to the god of the sea. The salty breeze offers an escape from the bustle of Athens, as mountains and the rocky ancient landscape provides a tranquil parting from Greece.

4 The Parthenon

The centerpiece of ancient Greece and modern-day Athens, the Acropolis literally stands above everything else and looms majestically over the city. A 20-minute walk to the top unveils the most famous structure of all, the Parthenon — a former temple dedicated to the goddess Athena, the city's patron. However, the scaffolding of its prolonged restoration project takes a bit away from its grandeur.

5 Syntagma Square

This is the heart of the city and site of mass protests in recent years over the Greek economic crisis. The square is right in front of parliament and the tomb of the unknown soldier, where soldiers in kilt-like garments and red leather clogs with black pompoms perform elaborate changing of the guard ceremonies several times a day.

Saskatchewan brew scene hopping

FOOD AND DRINK

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The tap is pulled forward, a pint glass tilted at an angle below, ready for the flow of golden liquid. Maybe it's an India Pale Ale, a blond, a sour or perhaps something a little darker like a Belgian-style Flanders.

Whatever quenches your thirst, craft brewers in Regina are offering beer selections to please the palate.

The guys at Rebellion Brewing brewed their 300th batch this month. That's the equivalent of one million pints since the company opened about two years ago.

"That's pretty awesome," said Mark Heise, who was a home brewer and became one of Rebellion's founders along with Jamie Singer.

"And I don't think our attitude has changed a whole lot — we still are just trying to make really fun, exciting beers that we enjoy."

Singer says the craft beer industry is growing across Canada and it's just starting to explode in Saskatchewan.

He says there's a feeling of camaraderie in the industry and everyone can work together to make Regina and the region a draw for craft beer.

"Our whole idea is very akin to what the winery region in the Okanagan is or Niagara region is," said Singer.

"They're all competitors, but ultimately, also, if you can pull people into that local stuff and get them drinking really great craft beer, or wine in the Okanagan, everybody else is going to be turned on to it too ... and we start to grow that whole market together."

Rebellion is in Regina's Warehouse District.

The tap room has 16 beers on tap, including beer from other Saskatchewan breweries, such as Nokomis Craft Ales, a microbrewery in Nokomis, about 135 kilometres north of Regina.

There's a small food menu that's all local, from the pizza to the pretzels to the meat pies. In the summer, food trucks set up out front.

"It's about just celebrating and enjoying things that make your community unique," said Heise.

Mark Heise and Jamie Singer, co-founders of Rebellion Brewing Company in Regina, are celebrating their 300th batch this month. MICHAEL BELL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Singer says the Bushwakker Brewpub, also in the Warehouse District, set the foundation for craft beer in Regina.

The Bushwakker Brewpub opened more than 25 years ago.

It's a full restaurant with the brewery attached. The walls have works from Saskatchewan artists, photographs from Regina's history — including when the Warehouse District was hit by a tornado in 1912 — and local music pours from the speakers. Bar manager Grant Frew says craft brewers, like Bushwakker, Rebellion and Regina's Malty National, are "all about making really good beer."

"The smaller breweries, we're making smaller batches of beer, we can use nothing but malted barley — that's the only thing that we use to produce the alcohol — and that has much more flavour," explained Frew.

The first Saturday of December has come to be known as Mead Day in Regina. The brew pub uses honey from the nearby community of Lumsden to make its Blackberry Mead and people wait for hours in anticipation.

The Bushwakker Brewpub sells more than 30 beers, including its own specialty and Nokomis, Black Bridge Brewery in Swift Current, Paddock Wood microbrewery in Saskatoon and Malty National.

Malty National is a microbrewery nestled in Regina's Heritage neighbourhood, in a building with a coffee shop and a vintage record and clothing store. It opened in March 2016.

Kelsey Beach, one of the owners of Malty National, says they brew six times a month. One beer was brewed with hops donated by local residents.

"Every brewery has its own taste and flavour profile ... and you can't get beers like the Bushwakker or Rebellion or Malty National elsewhere in Canada," said Beach. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IF YOU GO

- Rebellion Brewing offers free tours on Saturdays at 2 p.m. Group tours can be arranged too.
- Bushwakker Brewpub will do free tours. Call ahead to make plans. It also offers a beer school for around $10.

TRAVEL PITBULL, LUCAS & TUBMAN

GETTY IMAGES

Visit Florida to pay out CEO after Pitbull kerfuffle

Florida's tourism agency agreed to pay its outgoing president and CEO $73,000 U.S. amid the fallout from the state's secret deal with rapper Pitbull and a video for his song Sexy Beaches. Visit Florida is hiring a former federal prosecutor as the new CEO.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GETTY IMAGES

L.A. beats San Fran for George Lucas museum site

Star Wars creator George Lucas and his team have chosen Los Angeles over San Francisco as the home of a museum that will showcase his work. After what organizers called an extremely difficult decision, they announced Tuesday that the museum will be built in Exposition Park in Los Angeles. The project became the subject of a rivalry between the two cities.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Harriet Tubman park becomes a reality

U.S. federal parks officials have formally established the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in upstate New York. The New York park will focus on Tubman's work later on in her life when she was an active proponent of women's suffrage and other causes. It will be a sister park to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Slovenia in the spotlight

CUISINE

Mrs. Trump's homeland a marriage of old and new

A master chef is bringing attention to the cuisine of Melania Trump's homeland.

Ana Ros, who starred last year in an episode of the Chef's Table Netflix series, runs what some consider Slovenia's best restaurant in a remote village inn.

Slovenian tourism officials recently brought Ros to New York to showcase her culinary talents at a time when tourism in the country is booming, up to nearly three million tourists a year in a country of two million people.

Ros heads the kitchen in an inn called Hisa Franko. Her ever-changing menu there reads like no other, to name just a few dishes: fried white asparagus with celery cream; arctic char with wild berries and buttermilk; pasta filled with whipped cheese from sheep in nearby pastures, served with langoustines and mushrooms; and pork and lobster with ginger and pickled garlic on a bed of ancient Indian herbal leaves.

Top chef Ana Ros heads the kitchen at Hisa Franko in a remote Slovenian village. The tiny nation of two million is now hosting nearly three million tourists a year. SLOVENIAN TOURIST BOARD

Ros' husband, cheese and wine expert Valter Kramar, inherited Hisa Franko and a small farm from his father. The inn is located in the remote village of Kobarid, in the western part of the country, surrounded by pine forests in the emerald Soca River Valley. It was here that Ernest Hemingway set part of his World War I novel, A Farewell to Arms.

Ros' cooking skills are largely self-taught, though she was mentored by culinary luminaries to become a master chef of a surprising cuisine.

Ros and Kramar have travelled the world, blending global tastes and techniques with ingredients from local fields and their own vegetable garden. In some ways, Ros' menus reflect the cross-currents that define Slovenia, nestled as it is between Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia.

"Slovenia is a perfect mix of landscape and culture — the sea, the Alps and the rolling hills and plains, close to each other, with Mediterranean, Central European and Balkan influences," says Andrej Smrekar, an art curator at Ljubljana's National Gallery of Slovenia who helped turn a medieval monastery church in the countryside into a modern art gallery. "Tourists have a taste for what's authentic, but to them unknown and untouched."

When Melania Trump was a student in Ljubljana in the 1980s, the city was rocked by punk rebels and activists impatient to shake off the vestiges of drab socialist bureaucracy. Slovenia was mostly spared in the brutal civil war that followed independence from Yugoslavia of other republics farther south.

Now, Ljubljana is a lively metropolis of about 300,000 residents, but the city's roots go back to prehistory: A museum displays the earliest wheel used by humans in the area, before the ancient Romans arrived.

The city centre is traffic-free, with pedestrians crossing the river over a historic triple stone bridge that leads to outdoor produce vendors, a seafood market and shops offering everything from bread freshly baked in a wood-fired oven to flowers, spices and artisanal candles.

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Justin Thomas joined the PGA Tour's "59 Club" by making a 15-foot eagle on his last hole at the Sony Open in Honolulu for an 11-under 59

Falcons chase elusive title

NFL PLAYOFFS

Atlanta takes on Seattle after by week

The Falcons offence is led by quarterback Matt Ryan, who finished the regular season second in the league in passing yards (4,944). KEVIN C. COX/GETTY IMAGES

The Atlanta Falcons practised under blue skies Thursday, the temperature climbing toward 21 C.

A rare sight, indeed, for this time of year — and not just because of the unseasonable winter weather.

For only the eighth time in the franchise's 51-season history, the Falcons are among the final eight teams in the NFL playoffs. Of course, they have never won a Super Bowl title, an unachieved goal that looms in front of this high-scoring team heading into Saturday's divisional round game against the Seattle Seahawks.

"It would be a huge," said defensive lineman Jonathan Babineaux, the team's longest-tenured player. "The city of Atlanta has been waiting on a Super Bowl for many years now. To have a season like we've had, to be able to play the way we've been playing, everybody's excited, man."

Defensive end Dwight Freeney, in his first season with the team but 15th overall, can speak from experience about what it's like to be on a team carrying the burden of history. When he was with the Indianapolis Colts, they repeatedly came up short in the playoffs before finally winning it all during the 2006 season.

"It's kind of like you can breathe," Freeney said. "You had something so heavy on your back and you couldn't get it off."

The Falcons made their only Super Bowl appearance during the 1998 season with a team that was known as the "Dirty Birds."

Despite going 14-2 during the regular season, still the best mark in team history, Atlanta was a huge underdog in the NFC championship game at Minnesota, facing a Vikings team that had lost only once and set what was then a record for most points in a season.

But the Falcons rallied from 10 points down in the fourth quarter, catching a huge break when Gary Anderson botched a 38-yard field goal attempt in the closing minutes — his only miss of the season. Atlanta won in overtime, 30-27, on Morten Andersen's field goal.

The magic of that inspiring victory did not carry over to the Super Bowl. Team leader Eugene Robinson was arrested the night before the game, and the Falcons lost to the Denver Broncos 34-19 in John Elway's finale.

Second-year coach Dan Quinn was Seattle's defensive co-ordinator when the Seahawks won their first Super Bowl title three seasons ago. Looking to keep the focus firmly on this week's game, he doesn't want the Falcons thinking about the big picture.

Not yet anyway.

"That would be a great topic for a few weeks from now," Quinn said with a smile.

Looking at their total body of work, the Falcons certainly rank as one of the least successful franchises in the history of the NFL — Atlanta is joined by Minnesota, Cincinnati, Carolina, Jacksonville and the Houston Texans as the only franchises never to win a title of any kind.

And that stigma looms large in Atlanta.

"After hearing things ... it makes you work extra hard," rookie safety Keanu Neal said. "You know that the fans and everybody in Atlanta and Georgia care about this team and want us to do well."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DIVISIONAL SKED

SATURDAY
Seahawks at Falcons, 4:30 p.m.
Texans at Patriots, 8 p.m.

SUNDAY
Steelers at Chiefs, 1 p.m.
Packers at Cowboys, 4:30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Chargers relocating after 56 years in San Diego

The San Diego Chargers are moving to Los Angeles, where they will join the recently relocated Rams in giving the nation's second-largest media market two NFL teams for the first time in decades.

The team will be known as the Los Angeles Chargers and will relocate for the 2017 season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Koe salvages a draw for Team North America

A late comeback from North America's Kevin Koe prevented a World sweep in Thursday's opening draw of the Continental Cup of Curling in Las Vegas.

The Calgary skip scored two points in the eighth and final end for a 5-5 draw with Norway's Thomas Ulsrud.

Winnipeg's Jennifer Jones and Jamie Sinclair of the United States both fell in their opening matches.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Criminal charges pending Hillsborough disaster

British prosecutors will consider criminal charges against 23 suspects following separate investigations into the Hillsborough Stadium disaster in 1989 in which 96 soccer fans were killed.

The charges under consideration include manslaughter and perverting the course of justice as a result of an alleged coverup by police.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAKE IT TONIGHT

Simple Roasted Pork Tenderloin with Sweet Potatoes and Apples

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Celebrate with a proper roast dinner. This one-pan recipe is simple to make — and clean up!

Ready in 1 hour, 5 minutes
Prep time: 15
Cook time: 50
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 3 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 3 Tbsp maple syrup
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 large apple, peeled, cored and chopped into 1/2 inch wedges (use a firm apple)
- 2 tsp thyme, finely chopped
- 1 smallish sweet potato, peeled and chopped into 1/2-inch discs
- 1 onion, peeled and sliced into 1/4 inch rounds
- 1.25 – 1.5 kg pork loin
- Salt and pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In small bowl, mix 1 Tbsp Dijon, 1 Tbsp maple syrup, 1 Tbsp vinegar.

2. Assemble apples and vegetables in two rows in a roasting pan, alternating onion, sweet potato and apple. Brush marinade over everything. Roast 25 minutes.

3. Mix rest of Dijon, syrup, vinegar and thyme. Season pork with salt and pepper then brush marinade all over. Take roasting pan out of oven and place loin between the two rows of fruit and veg. Place back in oven 20 to 25 minutes. The internal temperature of pork should be between 140 and 145 degrees.

4. Take everything out and cover with foil for 10 minutes before slicing the pork and serving.

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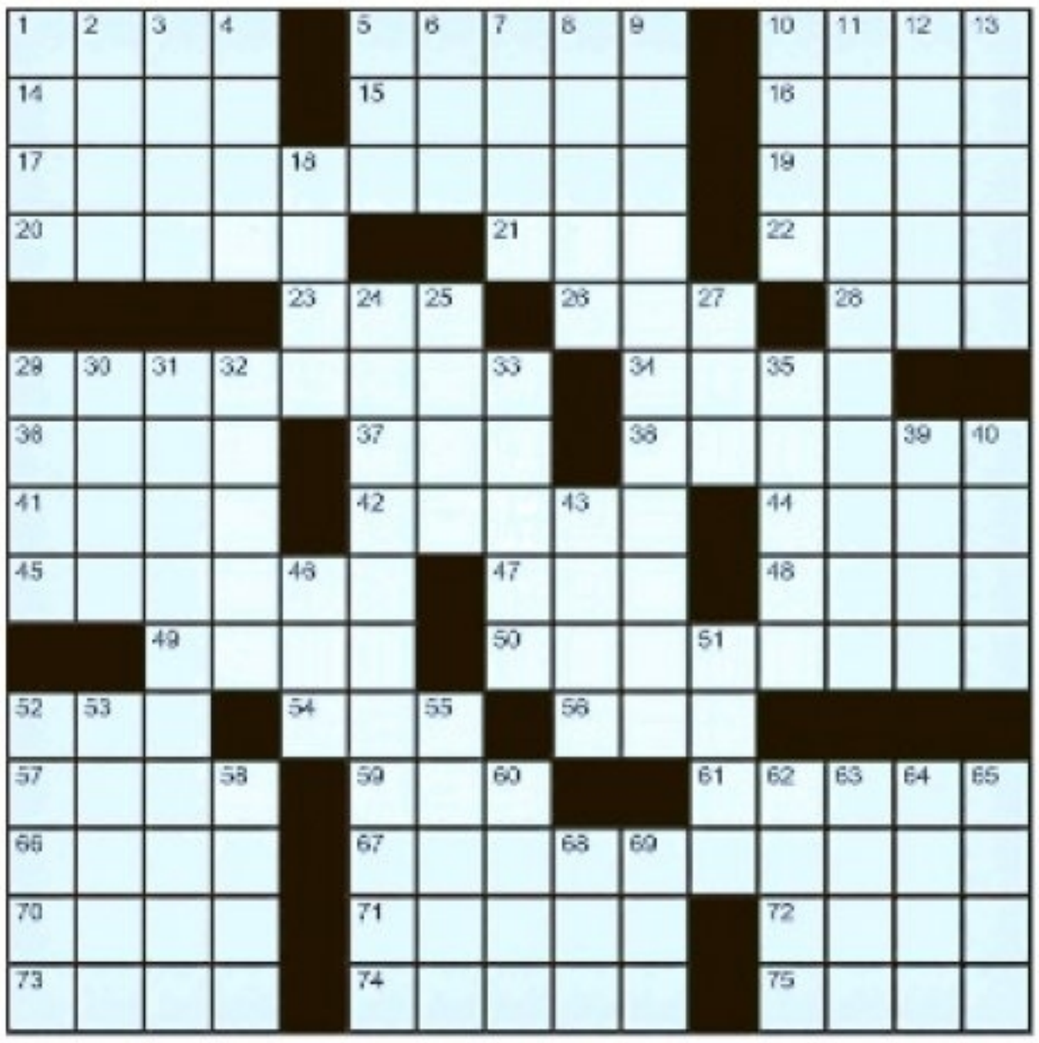
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Economist Mr. Greenspan
5. Alberta town just south of Edmonton
10. Loot
14. Singer/songwriter JJ
15. Ancient Greece's lyrical Muse
16. Mr. Gaston, Toronto Blue Jays championship Manager
17. Retro magical TV show featuring the dragon puppet of the title, "_-_-_"
19. Virginia willow
20. Portrait propper-upper
21. Fido's sound!
22. Gulf War missile
23. Seer's skill, shortly
26. Prefix with 'classical'
28. Some printers, e.g.
29. Star of #17-Across who played The Artful Dodger in "Oliver!" (1968): 2 wds.
34. Mr. Morales
36. "Son of _ _!"
37. Sonny & Cher
38. Artist-style hats
41. Sly tactic
42. TV star Ed
44. 5th Dimension's "_, _ and Away"
45. Lustrous fabric
47. Mining extract
48. 'The Big Easy'
49. Awful smelling
50. It's not pyrite: 2 wds.
52. Offshoot
54. Monogrammed star of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"
56. Caribbean music
57. Smashes
59. The Altar constellation
61. Ancient Greek colony
66. Moonfish
67. Stars grace them during awards season: 2 wds.
70. 'Noon' in Montreal
71. Danny Zuko, e.g., in "Grease" (1978)
72. Level
73. Seaport of Yemen
74. Himalayas' fabled creatures
75. Fictional detective Mr. Wolfe

DOWN
1. Pine
2. Ms. Flynn Boyle
3. Swiss peaks
4. Art museum in Manhattan, _ Galerie
5. Canadian actor Mr. Cariou
6. Hmmms...
7. Spreadsheet info
8. Motorist's about-face
9. Workday rest period: 2 wds.
10. Friends of '-Fis'
11. Character on #17-Across who got around via her Vroom Broom
12. Totally consumed: 2 wds.
13. Provokes
18. Travelled via air
24. The Krofft Brothers from Montreal who produced the live-action/puppetry series at #17-Across: 3 wds.
25. Positive
27. Sugary suffix
29. Jams containers
30. Water, in Seville
31. Bespoke
32. Prepare to pray
33. Giver
35. Go up _ _ (Step higher on the ladder)
39. Jethro _ (British rock band)
40. WWI fighter plane
43. '70s Spanish hit: "_ Tu"
46. '_' _ for Edmonton
51. Lion's retreat
52. Roses attraction
53. Swift
55. Loon-like bird
58. _ pads (Hockey gear)
60. Mine entrance
62. Welcoming
63. Ms. Campbell
64. Old road of Rome
65. "It should come _ _ surprise that..."
68. Dernier _ (Latest fashion)
69. Newspaper notices [abbr.]

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Because you are high-viz in the eyes of parents, bosses and VIPs right now, ask for what you want. It will be easier than you think to get people in power to say "yes" to your wishes.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Explore opportunities to travel and get further education, because this is what will expand your world. Expanding your world is what you need to do this month.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
It's only natural that your focus is on shared property, inheritances, insurance issues and debt at this time. You have good ideas about these areas.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You might have some unexpected insight into your closest relationships with others at this time. In fact, you can learn a lot about your own style of relating if you are aware.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You're willing to work hard now, because you're setting high standards for yourself. No slackers allowed! You want efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You're in touch with your creative vibes now, which is why you will enjoy exploring this energy. Meanwhile, sports events and playful times with children will appeal.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your conversations with a parent could be significant now, because there are changes that you are planning at home. You don't like to be caught off guard. You want to know what you're doing.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You want to be stimulated by short trips and conversations with others. You're full of ideas and you want to share them; plus, you want to hear what others think.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Cash flow and your assets are a concern right now. When you're making big plans, power is money. The question is, how much power do you have?

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are blessed now because the Sun is in your sign, boosting your energy and bringing opportunities and important people to you. Use this blessing wisely.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
It behooves you to work alone or behind the scenes right now. You also might want to plan what you want your new year to be all about.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Friendships are important to you now. Your interaction with someone younger might help you make some future goals.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

			4	5	1	6	8	
					8			4
		3			7			2
6				4		3	7	9
9			2		3			5
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2			7					
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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1	9	8	6	4	7	2	5	3
7	3	2	1	8	5	6	9	4
6	4	5	3	2	9	7	1	8
3	7	1	4	6	8	5	2	9
9	8	4	7	5	2	3	6	1
5	2	6	9	3	1	8	4	7
4	1	3	5	7	6	9	8	2
2	5	9	8	1	3	4	7	6
8	6	7	2	9	4	1	3	5

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